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STATE FOR USAID

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [KDEM](#) [BG](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR CALLS ON ADVISORS FOR EDUCATION AND  
WOMEN'S AFFAIRS

Classified By: Ambassador Patricia A. Butenis; reason 1.4(d)

¶1. (SBU) The Ambassador and USAID officer (note taker) met separately on January 31 with Geeteara Safiya Choudhury, Advisor for Industries, Jute and Textiles, Social Welfare, and Women and Children's Affairs and with Ayub Quatri, Advisor for Education, Primary and Mass Education and Cultural Affairs. USAID Mission Director Gene George joined the meeting with Quatri.

¶2. (C) Choudhury told the Ambassador that she, like most of the advisors, spends almost all of her time addressing immediate problems and dealing with unresolved issues that the previous Caretaker Government and administration were unable or unwilling to address. Choudhury's priority is to work with the staff of each of the ministries she manages to prioritize and map-out recommendations for the next administration once elections are held. Asked about privatization of the state-owned enterprises under the Industries ministry, Choudhury expressed personal support for privatization but said that, as a practical matter, the Caretaker administration would mostly be restricted to short-term initiatives. The Ambassador praised the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs as a strong counterpart for USAID sponsored early childhood development activities.

¶3. (C) Choudhury said all advisors have the same goal -- holding credible elections -- and would like to accomplish their task as soon as possible. She reiterated that the Caretaker Government only plans to do what is necessary to ensure achievable results in the shortest possible time frame.

¶4. (C) Advisor Quatri also said he struggles to clear a substantial back-log of actions in his ministries. The Ambassador noted that USAID was still waiting for authorization from the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education to allow USAID-sponsored NGO partners to work in certain government sponsored schools. Quatri promised to look into the matter.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: Ms. Choudhury is a high-energy person who owns the country's largest ad agency. She spoke of applying her no-nonsense, results-oriented private sector style to prod the bureaucracy into action. Mr. Quatri was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Connecticut. A retired civil servant, he served for ten years as a Secretary, including during two previous Caretaker regimes.

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Both advisors have close family members living in the U.S.  
BUTENIS